

Cervical Cancer



Monica Nagel believes that if there's something within her body to find, she wants to know about it right away so there's time to take care of it. Monica wants women to know: "Early detection is your best protection and that is why it is so important to have regular Pap Tests."

Tests for Cervical Cancer

- Half of all cervical cancers occur in women who have never had a Pap test. Cervical cancer is highly curable when found early.
- The Pap test (or Pap smear) checks the cells of the cervix (the opening of the uterus) for changes that can lead to cervical cancer.
- A Pap test can find abnormal cells that can be treated before the cells turn into cancer.
- The HPV test identifies the high-risk HPV types that can cause cervical cell changes.

Reduce Your Risk

- Females ages 9 through 26 should get the HPV vaccine (males should also get the vaccine).
 - Contact your local public health office or your healthcare provider for details.
- Limit your number of sexual partners.
- Use condoms during sex.
- See your healthcare provider regularly for a Pap test, and follow up if the results are not normal.
- Don't smoke.

Screening Guidelines for Cervical Cancer

Pap Test

- Begin Pap tests at age 21.
- Women under 30 years of age should have a Pap test every three years as recommended by their healthcare provider.
- Women ages 30-65:
 - should be screened every three years with a Pap test alone.
 - or every five years with a Pap test and HPV co-testing.
- Women 65 years and older should visit with their healthcare provider regarding when to stop testing.
- Women who have had a hysterectomy with cervix removal and no history of cervical cancer or pre-cancer can discontinue screening.

Be Informed

Visit www.healthfinder.gov to learn more about cervical cancer screening and questions to ask your healthcare provider about your individual needs for regular Pap tests.

Get Screened

Women's Way may provide a way to pay for Pap tests (as well as pelvic exams, mammograms and clinical breast exams) for eligible women ages 40 through 64:

- Call *Women's Way* at 1.800.44 WOMEN or visit www.ndhealth.gov/womensway.

Women of all ages can receive Pap tests on sliding fee scale according to income:

- Call the North Dakota Department of Health's Family Planning Program at 701-328-2228 or visit www.ndhealth.gov/familyplanning.